Book reviews

Copeman's Textbook of the Rheumatic Diseases. Vols 1 and 2. Edited by J T Scott. Pp. 816 (Vol 1), 1639 (Vol 2). £150.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1986.

The sixth edition of this British textbook of rheumatology is generally well written, has a good measure of authority, is well laid out, and has a large print size which makes reading easy. . . it is also a disappointment. The disappointment relates not so much to what is in the book (or rather books since there are two volumes) but rather to what is not in it. It is in essence three years out of date. Obviously in a book of this size and scope a certain time lag must occur but there are few references from 1984 onwards, and in fast moving fields such as immunogenetics, immunohistology, lymphokine studies, and molecular biology, for example, this is important.

Volume 1 details the fundamental structure and function of joints, describes the process of inflammation, the drugs used to treat rheumatic conditions, and has sections on rheumatoid arthritis and the seronegative arthritides. Volume 2 details osteoarthritis, metabolic disease, arthritis in children, connective tissue diseases, regional disorders, therapeutic modalities, including rehabilitation, and ends with a section on clinical and laboratory techniques. Some aspects of this layout struck me as a little odd. Why consign history taking and physical examination to the final section for example?

One criticism that I would make of the style in which many chapters are written is the tendency of the authors to present conflicting evidence rather than criticise it. Although this maintains the concept of fair play, it is too anodyne an approach. It is the exceptional author, like Brian Hazleman in his chapter on polymyalgia rheumatica and giant cell arteritis, who is prepared to say 'in the author's view . . .'. Even if you don't agree with the author's opinion it makes for more stimulating reading.

Some chapters, however, do have an élan which makes them stand out irrespective of any lack of more recently published data. For me these chapters are those written by Michael Denman on immunological mechanisms, Gabriel Panayi on the aetiopathogenesis of rheumatoid arthritis, Terence Stamp on metabolic bone disease, and Professors Dumonde and Steward with Dr Brown on the role of microbial infection in rheumatic diseases.

The paucity of colour figures is a shame, though there are undoubtedly good economic reasons for this (the edition costs £150, which compares with £180 for the second edition of the *Textbook of Rheumatology* by Kelly *et al.*). It is unfortunate, for example, to inform the reader that a histology section was prepared using Martius scarlet blue stain since this promises rather more than it delivers in black and white! Similarly, the lack of colour is painfully obvious in clinical photographs showing any sort of rash. In general the figures do have good clarity but the x ray

reproduction is more variable in quality. The editors have done a good job, though it is noticeable that the reference list in some chapters gives 1983 references as 'in press', while other chapters give full details of 1984 and, very rarely, 1985 references. The occasional mistake is also obvious, such as the transposition of the legends of Figs 50.1 and 50.2.

Among a number of omissions or subjects rather briefly dealt with, I noted the air pouch model of synovitis, the value of muscle needle biopsy, NMR scanning, the potential role of cyclosporin in the therapy of the autoimmune diseases, and the many animal models of lupus and myositis. Nevertheless, for many British rheumatology departments the latest edition of 'Copeman' will remain a requisite for the library shelves. If only it had appeared about 18 months ago.

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Sports Injuries and Their Treatment. Eds B Helal, J B King, W J Grange. Pp. 482. £47.50. Chapman and Hall: Andover, Hants. 1986.

There has been an explosion of sporting activity in the general population over the last few years and, like it or not, rheumatologists are seeing and will continue to see an increasing number of patients in whom injury has caused or aggravated musculoskeletal symptoms. This well balanced book provides a comprehensive account of the differential diagnosis of sports injuries and the basic principles of management, without recourse to complex surgical details. It provides a commonsense approach in a field where treatment methods are so often of unproved value. The chapters are divided on an anatomical basis, but with reference to injuries common in a particular sport and methods of prevention. There are sections on ear, nose, and throat, ophthalmic, and visceral injuries, and the important psychological and medicolegal aspects of sport are also covered. Illustrations, including x rays, are generally of high quality and well selected, and each chapter is followed by a short list of mainly up to date and useful references.

In such a comprehensive text it is surprising that there is no mention of the value of electrodiagnosis in assessment, and the important subject of sport for the disabled, with its special injury problems, has been omitted. Despite these deficiencies this is an excellent book and is highly recommended for clinicians specifically dealing with the current epidemic of sports injuries. As a reference text, however, it will be very helpful to the general rheumatologist confronted by a puzzling injury related problem.

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